

spines nearly two inches long. A stab from one of these is an agonising experience and often requires hospital treatment. The fishermen state that if it were not for the Pelicans cleaning up the Cobbler heads they would have to bury them as a stab from an old and long dead Cobbler's spine will still inflict a very painful wound.

One cannot help wondering how the digestive tract of the Pelican copes with this mass of poisonous spines after a meal of Cobbler heads. They certainly have no ill effects on the birds as the same six Pelicans frequented our beach for a fortnight and received a meal of Cobbler heads on most days.

—D. H. PERRY, Victoria Park.

**Call-notes of Bronze Cuckoos, *Clayococcyx lucidus* and *basalis*—**Serventy and Whittell (*Birds of Western Australia*, 1967: 279-281) state that the two local species of bronze cuckoos can be readily separated by their call-notes. My observations dispute this.

In the Darling Range west of Mundaring Weir, the Golden Bronze Cuckoo, *C. lucidus*, is the commoner cuckoo, being most numerous near cultivated areas where it feeds extensively on the hairy black caterpillars of the tiger moth, *Spilosoma glatignyi*. During times of low population density, posturing behaviour between individuals is rare and birds frequently utter "pee-pee-pee" calls which often culminate in a drawn-out "pee-er." In an uninterrupted sequence of between 15 and 20 "pee" notes the final note is nearly always given. Often after about 6 or more "pee" notes the call ceases. In August when population levels are high, sometimes as many as 6 birds gather and prolonged posturing takes place, during which tails and wings are fanned vigorously and a continuous series of "pee-er" notes are uttered (cf. courtship behaviour in *C. basalis*, Kloot, *Euuu*, 69: 116). At other times one bird of a pair will chase a newcomer, both birds uttering "pee-er" notes. Sometimes even a solitary bird will utter "pee-er" notes, but not as a continuous series.

In the same area the Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo, *C. basalis*, is infrequently observed. They usually attract attention by calling from the topmost dead limb of a tree. The most frequent call is a series of "pee-er" notes. Timed series vary from 18 "pee-ers" in 33 seconds to 24 in 37 seconds. The only other call recorded, syllabised as "still" or "strill" is given apparently at random, including in flight. This note is lower pitched than the "pee-er" call and is very similar to a call, while perched, of the Elegant Parrot.

My observations indicate that call notes may not be diagnostic unless the activity of the birds is noted.

—JOHN DELL, Kalamunda.

**Catching Pygmy Possums.**—I am submitting this short note to record an interesting discovery made by Mr. M. A. Moir, who farms the property known as 'Salisbury,' south-east of Borden, W.A.

I know of no certain way of obtaining specimens of *Cercartetus*. For instance, in contrast to most rodents, they do not readily come to traps; on the other hand, the very considerable number of Pygmy Possums sent in to the W.A. Museum by members of the public, who have chanced upon them, is testimony that they are common enough animals. It is hoped that the details below may serve as the basis for a method which could provide numbers of these animals to zoologists needing them for research purposes.

During the early part of July 1967 Mr. Moir hungessian sacks over the wire strands at two levels along a stretch of the fence between two of his paddocks. The result was that the upper sacks lapped over the lower ones, which in turn were clear of the ground by several inches. When he came to take the sacks down again nearly two months later he found that about a dozen small mammals were using the overlap of the sacks as daytime shelters. He photographed one of them, and later sent